the Compulsory Marriage Act would not be implemented because of other practical problems. Even though they appreciated, that it has to be done, in our Indian condiions, due to certain inaccessibility and illiteracy they suggested that it cannot be practically done. It may be that a provision for compulsory registration of marriages already exists in the Indian Christian Act, 1872, The Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act, 1938 and the special Marriage Act, 1954. Section 8 of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 makes an enabling provision for providing registration of marriages by means of rules to be framed by the State Government. According to that, many States have already made legislations, like the Bombay Registration Marriage act, 1953 which has been enforced in the States of Maharashtra and Gujarat. In Karnataka also, they have made an Act in 1976. Therefore, there is no bar in making such kinds of legislations by the State. Then the Parliament can concur with it. Therefore, though whatever Shri Margabandu said, is a good idea, is a welcome thing, I hope the State Government makes such kinds of legislations and I hope the Centre will accept it and give their concurrence to that. We can do it. Therefore, I request our hon. Member to withdraw this and we will make all efforts to see that such a legislation is enacted and it is approved by our Parliament. From that point of view I request him to withdraw. We will take into consideration all the aspects. With these words, I request the hon. Member to withdraw this Bill.

SHRI R. MARGABANDU: I am very much thankful to the Members who have participated in this discussion specially, Justice Singhvi and Justice Ranganath Misra. They have given their valuable suggestions. So far as Justice Singhvi is concerned, even though there are marriages which are not registered they should also be recognised. I do not say that the marriages which are not registered should be declared as invalid. When a marriage is registered, it provide a proof of marriage. So the other forms of mariage can be considered. He has suggested that it is impossible. My respectful submission is, when registration of birth is made compulsory, when vaccination is made compulsory—if any child is not vaccinated, we are prosecuted in a court of law—Why not this? If any property transacion which is above Rs. 100 has to be compulsorily registered why not this? So, everywhere, there are sub registrar offices and there is no difficulty in getting these marriages registered. But one point is, if it is not registered, it should be declared as invalid. Justice Ranganath Misra also said that when the students fall in love with each other, they get married and they go to the registration office and after six months or one year, they fall through.

When he is admitting that they get married live together and sometimes later they fell through, what will happen to the fate of the other party? So, in this way, registration is necessary and State Governments must come forward and see that necessary legislation is made to make it cmpulsory. As suggested by Justice Ranganath Misra, it should be thoroughly discussed in the Law Commission and if a concrete proposal comes out, it will be good for everybody. It is not for any section of the people; it is good for the entire nation. In view of the assurance given by the hon. Minister, I withdraw my Bill.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Does the hon. Member have the permission to withdraw the Bill?

HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

The Bill was, by leave, withdrawn.

MESSAGE FROM THE LOK SABHA

The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 1998

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Madam, I beg to report that the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 4th December, 1998, adopted a motion extending the time up to 9th December, 1998, for presentation of the Report of the Joint Committee on the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 1998.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN: We will take up Special Mentions now.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM NAIK): Madam, I want to make a short statement. I had given notice.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): You have given notice. There is no doubt about it. But this is a listed business and three are only a few Members left. We will take up your statement after these Special Mentions are over. Yes, Mr. Goradia, Please.

SPECIAL MENTIONS CONTD.

Protest Day being observed by Christians against Atrocities committed on them—Contd.

SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Madam, because it was 2.30, I was in the middle of my brief submission where I did ask for House's patience because my education is owed largely to Catholic Anglo Indians and I have many Christian friends and, therefore, I tend to be a little pro-Christian. But, nevertheless, I am unable to be pro-evangelical activity. I was giving these two instances, when the House had to change over to the Private Members' Legislative Business.

Before I go any further, and it is not along way to go, let me quote Mahatma Gandhi on the subject of evangelism, that is, attempt to convert. The quotation is available at page 110 of Volume No. 46 of the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi. Mahatma Gandhi said:

> "If I had the power and could legislate, I should certainly stop all proselytising".

He went on—

> "to exhort the Missionaries to stop Conversions. It is the deadliest poison that ever sapped the foundation of truth".

So, I am only in a very, very humble way supporting what the great Mahatma Gandhi had once said.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: He never went and bashed people. He just wrote.

SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: I think it was the hon. Member, Mr. Poulose, who said something about an incident in Baroda. The last one happened to take place at the end of October. This was reported in the Press as an atrocity against the Christians. Now, I would like to again point out that there is a difference between the Christians who have a vested interest in living happily and peacefully in the society as opposed to evangelists, who have a vested interest in conversions. This confusion should kindly be prevented. Then only will we ever get to the bottom of the problem and solve it. (*Interruptions*)

MISS MABEL REBELLO: What do you know about evangelism? (*Interruptions*) You do not know the whole concept of evangelism? How can you speak like that? (*Interruption*) You do not know the meaning of evangelism. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: You are justifying vandalism. (*Interruptions*) This House is being used to justify vandalism. (*Interruptions*)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): Mr. Basu, let him conclude first. You can clarify after that. Don't interrupt like this. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Madam, by what he is saying, he is only defending vandalism. (*Interruptions*)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE) : I think Mr. Goradia is quite able to face his colleagues here in the House.

SHRI PRAFUL GORADIA: Since there is so much strong feeling about my quoting Mahatma Gandhi and saying things, let me stick to the 'Times of India' which certainly is not a pro-BJP or a Sangh Parivar paper. Therein, I wrote a letter wherein I described the events in Vadodara where a musical conference was held with Mr. Wilson George.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): Mr. Goradia, please conclude now.

SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Very well, I will do it in a minute, Madam. I will obey you. In that letter, I gave a description of all that happened and I also emphasised that there was no violence and not a drop of blood was shed. Now, Mother Grace Mathews who was the centre of this Programme in Vadodara has written a long letter, also in 'the Time of India' on the 18th November, 1998 which confirms everything I have said, excepting what I said about not a drop of blood being shed. There, she says, "Nothing could be farther from the